Research Trends in History

Volume - 1

Chief Editor

Dr. Arun Kumar
Associate Professor and H.O.D. History, Mahila College, Patliputra University, Khagaul, Patna, Bihar, India

Helmand Books™
New Delhi

Published By: Helmand Books

Helmand Books
Office No 3, 1st Floor, Pocket - H34,
SEC-3, Rohini, Delhi, 110085, India
Phone No. +91-9711339182
Email – helmandbooks@gmail.com

Chief Editor: Dr. Arun Kumar

The author/publisher has attempted to trace and acknowledge the materials reproduced in this publication and apologize if permission and acknowledgements to publish in this form have not been given. If any material has not been acknowledged please write and let us know so that we may rectify it.
The responsibility for facts stated, opinion expressed or conclusions reached and plagiarism, if any, in this book is entirely that of the author. So, the views and research findings provided in this publication are those of the author/s only. The Editor & Publishers are in no way responsible for its contents.

© Helmand Books™

Publication Year: 2025

Pages: 99

ISBN: 978-93-93992-94-9

Price: 709/-

Contents

Chapters	Page No.
1. Handcrafted Religious Textiles of India *(Dr. Pragya Pathak)*	01-34
2. Sasanian Imperial Policy and King Xusrō I Anōšīrvān's Reform: The Case of Ādurbādagān and Arrān (Caucasian Albania) *(Dr. Mahir Khalifa-Zadeh)*	35-65
3. Women during the Vijayanagar Empire *(Dr. Hemappa B. Kenchalli)*	67-78
4. The Role of Society in Preventing Domestic Violence against Women with Reference to Domestic Violence Act *(Dr. K. Neela Pushpam)*	79-99

Chapter - 2
Sasanian Imperial Policy and King Xusrō I Anōšīrvān's Reform: The Case of Ādurbādagān and Arrān (Caucasian Albania)

Author

Dr. Mahir Khalifa-Zadeh
Ph.D., Canadian Historical Association 130 Albert Street, Suite 1912, Ottawa, ON, K1P5G4, Canada

Chapter - 2

Sasanian Imperial Policy and King Xusrō I Anōšīrvān's Reform: The Case of Ādurbādagān and Arrān (Caucasian Albania)

Dr. Mahir Khalifa-Zadeh

Abstract

The author analyses the Sasanian imperial policy and strategy toward Ādurbādagān and Arrān (Caucasian Albania) as well as the impact of King Xusrō I Anōšīrvān's reforms on these regions. The analysis briefly overviews Ardaxšīr I's rise to power highlighting the Sasanian dynasty's political ambitions. The author discusses Shāpūr I's ideological and political reasons for declaring the Ādur Gušnasp fire-temple in Azerbaijan the empire's most sacred fire and proclaiming Zoroastrianism as the state religion. Shāpūr I's decision transformed Ādurbādagān into the empire's Zoroastrian religious and ideological centre, increasing the province's strategic value. However, Ādurbādagān's proximity to the main war zones heightened its vulnerability. The author notes that King Xusrō I Anōšīrvān's reform enhanced Ādurbādagān's security by the establishment of the kust-i Ādurbādagān and Ādurbādagān's spāhbed (general) military command covering Arrān (Caucasian Albania). The author emphasizes Arrān's military and geostrategic importance in the Sasanian policy to prevent the Turks' incursions and contain Byzantine advance in Caucasia. The reform tightened Albania's attachment to Azerbaijan increasing its military capacity and strategic value. In the late Sasanian period Ādurbādagān and Arrān became interchangeable names in the northern bank of the Aras River through the creation of the entire Ādurbādagān šahr shielding Ērānšahr.

Keywords: Sasanian, Khosrow Anushirvan, Adurbadagan, Arran, Caucasian Albania, Azerbaijan

Introduction

The Sasanian period occupies a significant part of the history of Iran. Some scholars consider the rise of the Sasanians as being a coup d'etat of Medes and Persians against the Parthian Arsacids. There is also an opinion

that the Sasanian period was characterised by a Sasanian-Parthian confederacy [1]. Nevertheless, having Parthian roots as some scholars argue, the Sasanians proclaimed the restoration of the Truth and Persian Glory [2]. Intriguingly that instead of the fire-temple to Anāhītā in Pārs from where they rose to power, the Sasanians proclaimed the holy shrine of Ādur Gušnasp in Ādurbādagān the empire's most sacred fire attaching themselves to this highest victorious warriors class fire. Moreover, the Sasanians granted the rank of "cathedral" to the fire-temple Ādur Gušnasp, which was the last survived fire of the Great Fires of State established sometime in the Parthian period [3]

Indeed, there is interest in discussing the political, religious, and ideological reasons for this significant shift in Sasanian politics. The proclamation of Ādur Gušnasp of Media as the cathedral fire-temple demonstrates these further developments in Sasanian politics and strategy. It followed the transformation of Ādurbādagān into the religious "core" and ideological centre of the empire. This significant shift had administrative and military consequences that were addressed in Kawād I and Xusrō I Anōšīrvān's reforms.

Rise of the House of Sāsān: Short Overview

Following the struggle for power between different branches of the House of Arsacids in the late history of Parthia, the House of Sāsān rose in Iran as a result of internal Parthian struggles. There is evidence that a certain Sāsān, possibly a Parthian soldier or someone of Indo-Parthian origin, worked or was stationed in the house of Pābaq-the ruler of Istakhr in Persis/Pārs/Fārs. Some scholars indicate that Sāsān might have been a custodian of a great fire-temple to Anāhītā where Pābaq was a priest. In this regard, the epic treatment in Firdowsi's masterpiece *Šāhnāme,* based on the Sasanian chronicle "*Xwadāy-namāg*", states that Pābaq's daughter (or Pābaq's wife as he had a vision of his wife giving birth to a great king) [4] was married to Sāsān, and the princess gave birth to Ardaxšīr I (Fig.1) [5].

Fig 1: Gold dinar of Ardashir I, 230 AD (wiki)

Indeed, the rise of the house of Sāsān and the origin of Ardaxšīr I remain mysterious, but most scholars follow Tabari's account as in the Shahnameh, that Pābaq's daughter married Sāsān [6] and gave birth to Ardaxšīr.

When Ardaxšīr came to power, he proclaimed his official genealogy as "*ardaxšīr ī kay ī pābagān ī az tōhmag ī sāsān nāf ī dārā šāh*"-"Ardaxšīr the Kayānid, the son of Pābag, from the race of Sāsān, from the family of King Dārāy." However, as Turaj Darayee interprets this: "The Kayānid dynasty in the Avesta, the mysterious protective deity Sāsān, and the connection to Dārāy (probably the conflation of the Achaemenids, Darius I and Darius II, and the Persis kings, Dārāyān I and Dārāyān II) all suggest falsification of his lineage" [7].

Nevertheless, Ardaxšīr I officially proclaimed himself as king of Persian origin and a descendant of the great Achaemenids [8]. However, the hostilities and internal struggle for power between great Persian (Parsiq) and Parthian (Pahlav) families (Houses) was resumed until the Muslims' conquest Iran [9].

In 224 CE, on the same day of the decisive battle of Hormizdagān, Ardaxšīr proclaimed himself shāhanshāh, slaying the Parthian king Ardawān IV. Later, Ardaxšīr I officially had himself coronated in the captured Parthian imperial capital Ctesiphon, establishing the Sasanian empire [10].

Imperial Religion, Ideology and Ādurbādagān

As one may interpret, Ardaxšīr I's official genealogy and the stone reliefs at Naqsh-e Rostam represent not only his official origin but also his power's political essence: the re-enforcement of Zoroastrianism and re-establishment of the Glory of Persians following the restoration of Persian rule in previously Achaemenid' lands. In this respect, Ardaxšīr's official genealogy, highlighting that he was from the family of King Dārāy, was designed to support his reign's ideology that he was the descendent of the Achaemenids, emphasizing his ambition to follow and protect the Persian Glory [11].

In the meantime, it is safe to assume that the relief at Naqsh-e Rostam, showing Ardaxšīr I receiving the ring (seal) of kingship as shāhanshāh of Ērānšahr from Ahura Mazdā, propagates a divine blessing for his rule and demonstrates his duty to follow and enforce Zoroastrianism. In addition to this, the *Kārnāmag ī Ardašīr ī Pāpagān* (Book of the Deeds of Ardeshir, Son of Papak), through its propagandistic and ideological nature, supports and proclaims the legitimacy of Sasanian rule and ambitions [12].

Indeed, the strategy Ardaxšīr I and his son Shāpūr I's focused on creating a centralized Sasanian empire in a Zoroastrian oecumene [13] and on

establishing Zoroastrianism as the sole religion of the state [14]. Shāpūr I followed his father's policy and ideology, which could be confirmed by the rock- carvings at Naqsh-e Rostam showing Ardaxšīr I giving the ring or seal of rule to his son (Fig.2). Like his father, Shāpūr I expressed his devotion to fire as an icon of the religion and officially proclaimed Zoroastrianism the state religion [15].

Fig 2: Drawing of Sasanian rock relief: Ardashir I (r. A.D. 224-241) and the Zoroastrian divinity Ohrmazd [Ahura Mazda] at Naqsh-i Rustam, southern Iran (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, USA)

In this light, it can be assumed that Sasanian imperialism [16] was the strategy of Shāpūr I's imperial policy which was based on Zoroastrian religion and Achaemenids' Glory. He was focused on enforcing a centralized Sasanian state in a Zoroastrian oecumene, eliminating the last signs of Hellenism that had survived the Parthian period. He used Sasanian imperialism as a tool to enforce Zoroastrianism and the central power in lands surrounding Ērānšahr. Thus, Shāpūr I established many Bāhram fires for his soul (Xusraw Šāhbūhr), his daughter (Xusraw Ādur-Anāhīd), and many others. He also established sacred fires and supported communities of priests in Syria, Cilicia, Cappadocia, and Armin (Armenia or Arminiyaya) [17].

Politically and ideologically, the establishment of the sacred fires network was aimed at strengthening the power of the shāhanshāh and symbolized the unification of the state and the authority of the hierarchy of priests and the ubiquitous nature of the religion. Moreover, the early Sasanians categorised the fire temples, particularly three Great Fires of State, one of which, the fire of Ādur Gušnasp in Ādurbādagān, was declared the highest grade or warrior (artēštār) class fire [18].

Interestingly, in the Seleucid and Parthian eras, the province of Ādurbādagān (Parthian or Arsacid Pahlavi: Āturpātākān) played a central role as a stronghold against the spread of the Greek and Roman pantheons in Iran. Moreover, it is highly likely that Āturpātākān was the place where the prophet Zarathustra was born [19, 20], and the Holy Avesta was kept in the holy shrine of the Ātur (Old Persian) or Ādur Gušnasp fire-temple in Šiz (now Takht-e Sulaiman, West Azerbaijan, Iran) [21, 22].

Ādur Gušnasp, an Ataš Bahrām (Parthian: Ātaš-i-Wahram or Pahlavi: Ādur Bahrām-"fires of Victory," the Zoroastrian name of the God of War and Victory), was most sacred or "cathedral" fire of the highest grade in Zoroastrianism, established in the late Achaemenid or Parthian era in Ādurbādagān in Media [23]. Each new king, as Shāpūr I proclaimed, was obligated to make a pilgrimage after coronation to Ādur Gušnasp, providing royal gifts and celebrating Nowruz (No Ruz), (Fig.3).

Fig 3: Ruins of Ādur Gušnasp (now Azargoshnasp), Takht-e Sulaiman, West Azerbaijan, Iran

Intriguingly, the Sasanians, despite their proclaimed Persian origin, followed the Parthian Arsacid tradition of donations to the Ādur Burzēn-Mihr fire. This was the second fire of the Great Fires of State, as the Sasanians categorised it. It was established sometime in the 5th-4th century BC in Parthia (the northeast of Iran), but, at the time of the Sasanids, it had been occupied and destroyed [24].

Ideologically, the proclamation of the Ādur Gušnasp fire of Media as the warrior's class fire to which the Sasanians attached themselves served to demonstrate Persia's superiority over Media and Parthia [25].

Next, aiming to secure themselves as the ruling dynasty, the early Sasanians' strategy was focused on putting the politically powerful and religiously and ideologically influential Zoroastrian clergy or Magi/Magus under the shāhanshāh's control. As some scholars believe, the Maguses (maguš) were a class of priests and tribe from Media [26, 27], which played the cathedral role at the time [28]. Igor Diakonoff believed that the Maguses supplied the Medes with court priests as early as under the last Median king Astyages [29].

Thus, the early Sasanians, as followers of the Persian Achaemenid, attempted to control Maguses of Median and/or Persian origin considering it a high-priority political and ideological task to secure the power of Persians over Media and Medes [30]. The possibility should not be excluded that the Sasanians knew of Gaumāta's or the Maguses'/Medes' revolt [31].

In this regard, Ardaxšīr I and his son Shāpūr I, attempting to control the Zoroastrian clergy that was a key element of their imperial strategy, supported and promoted Kirdēr the herbed (priestly teacher) the famous and powerful religious leader of the time giving him a position close to the shāhanshāh's court and ordering him to categorize the Great Fires and ceremonial protocols. Shāpūr I granted Kirdēr the title of mobedān mobed (priest of priests). Kirdēr was affiliated with the fire-temple of Ādur Gušnasp in Azerbaijan and held the other name Kirdēr-Gušnasp [32]. The other highly influential and powerful mobedān mobed in the Sasanian king Šāpūr II's rein was Ādurbād-ī Mahrspandān ("Ādurbād, son of Mahraspand") who was also affiliated with Ādur Gušnasp [33].

Ideologically, by placing Zoroastrian priests close to the court, the early Sasanians focused on demonstrating the unity of State and Church, which were interconnected and mutually dependent. As Ardaxšīr I's chief priest Kirdēr stated, "Church and State were born of one womb" [34]. The early Sasanians needed Zoroastrian priests to act as their counselors in religious affairs to support the dynasty's claim to legitimacy [35, 36]. Shāpūr I authorized Kirdēr-mobedān mobed and Zoroastrian fanatic-to eliminate the Mithraism along the Medes and Maguses of Media allowing him to establish the fire-temples around the empire and in Syria and Armenia to strengthen Zoroastrianism in the lands challenging by Christian Byzantium.

Next, it should not be excluded that the proclamation of Ādur Gušnasp as the empire's most sacred fire of the pērōzgar (victorious) warriors was the step of ideological distancing from the Macedonians' destruction of the fire-temple of Anāhītā, even though this temple played a role in the Sasanian rise to power.

One can assume that the early Sasanians needed to demonstrate the ideological and political proof that they were the restorers of the Truth (which "must needs be restored by a man of true and upright judgment") and the Glory of Persians over the Medians and Parthians [37].

Thus, one may state that the distancing from the Anāhītā fire in Fārs to the Ādur Gušnasp warrior class fire in Ādurbādagān indicated a significant shift in the Sasanian ideology from their origin as restorers of the Truth to the protectors and fighters of the Truth as victorious warriors.

However, the proclamation of Ādur Gušnasp fire as the most sacred imperial sanctuary, possibly, had other additional grounds. The fire-temple of Goddess Anāhītā had been sacked and desecrated by Alexander of Macedon, who had burnt there the 12,000 ox-hides on which the original Avesta was written in golden lettering and which had been placed in the Fortress of Archives in the city of Istakhr in Pārs [38]. However, the other copy of the Holy Avesta [39], copied on calf skins, was kept in the fire temple of Ādur Gušnasp in Ādurbādagān [40].

In this regard, it should be noted that King Darius III's General Aturpāt (Atropates), satrap of Media, was able to secure the holy fire in Ādur Gušnasp. In 324 B.C., Aturpāt pacified unrest against the Greeks and Alexander decided to keep him as king of the land, which later became the independent (or semi-independent, vassal of Arsacid Parthia) kingdom of Atropatena (Greek) or Āturpātākān (Parthian or Arsakid Pahlavi). Atropates' daughter was married to Perdiccas, a close ally of Alexander and commander of the Macedonian cavalry (Fig.4) [41].

Fig 4: Aturpāt (Greek: Atropates) meets Alexander of Macedon, Painting 1956, National Museum of History, Baku, Azerbaijan

Thus, it is safe to assume that Shāpūr I's decision to declare Ādur Gušnasp, the sole survivor of the three Great Fires of State, as the empire's most sacred fire-temple had the logic of an ideological "clean up" of the Macedonians' destruction of the Anāhītā fire-temple and burning there of the Holy Avesta symbolizing Shāpūr I's full departure (political and ideological) from the vestiges of Hellenism surviving from the Parthian period and marked a policy of remedying the great impact that the Greeks had had on the country as the destroyers of the Achaemenids to whom the Sasanians attached their genealogy.

In the meantime, selecting Ādur Gušnasp as the cathedral fire-temple allowed Shāpūr I to secure direct control over the powerful Zoroastrian priests or Maguses affiliated with this temple. It also allowed him to keep the religious clergy within the official Sasanian policy, eliminating any avenue for anti-dynastic propaganda or even revolt of the Medes or Maguses.

Indeed, if the early Sasanians declared that their mission was the restoration of the Truth and Persian Glory, linking their genealogy to the Achaemenids, one may assume that the "pure clean" fire-temple never desecrated by the Macedonians should be selected as the empire's sacred cathedral fire.

Consequently, Ādurbādagān's Ādur Gušnasp fire-temple, which preserved the Holy Avesta, was proclaimed as the Sasanian empire's most sacred fire of the highest grade holding the rank of the victorious warriors' class fire to which the Sasanians attached themselves. Moreover, the Sasanians, categorizing Ādur Gušnasp (the last survived Great Fire of State) as the "cathedral" fire-temple, transformed Ādurbādagān into the empire's religious and ideological centre, with military and administrative consequences ensuing [42].

Finally, in the Sasanian era, Ādurbādagān became the religious centre preserving and expanding Zoroaster's faith. The chief Median sacred fire-temple of Ādur Gušnasp, which had been established sometime in the Parthian period on a hill near Āturpātākān's capital Ganzak, was declared the most sacred fire of the empire. Each new king, as Shāpūr I proclaimed, was obligated after coronation to make a pilgrimage there providing royal gifts and celebrating No Ruz (Nowruz) [43].

Fig 5: Map of Ādurbādāgān and its capital Ganzak and Arrān (Caucasian Albania), 5th -6th century CE

Xusrō I Anōšīrvān's Reform: kust-ī Ādurbādāgān and Arrān

There is no doubt that the fire-temple of Anāhītā in Pārs continued to occupy the heart of the Sasanian dynasty. Moreover, the Sasanians presented themselves as the guardians of the temple [44]. However, it should not be excluded that the declared political and ideological ambitions of the early Sasanians reasonably dictated them to distance from the ransacked Anāhītā fire-temple following the proclamation Ādur Gušnasp of Media as the "cathedral" and the most sacred fire of the empire and classified it as the victorious (pērōzgar) warriors (artēštār) class fire [45].

Following the proclamation of Zoroastrianism as the state religion, this fundamental development pushed Azerbaijan to occupy the place and role of the empire's religious "core". Khalil Hakimfar highlighted that when Maguses were converted to Zoroastrianism under the empire's chief priest (mobedān mobed) Kirdēr-Gušnasp of Ādur Gušnasp, Azerbaijan became an ideological centre of the propagation of the Zoroastrian religion [46].

It is important to stress that Byzantium acknowledged the imperial, military, and religious value of Ādurbādagān. In 623, the Byzantine emperor Heraclius, during the last Byzantine-Sassanian war of 602-628 CE, occupied

Azerbaijan and sacked Ādur Gušnasp aiming to crush the Sasanians' will and power to fight. As some scholars have argued, this war had the function of religious revenge [47] indicating emperor Heraclius' letters before the war, as well as the Byzantines' return to Jerusalem of the Holy Cross, which was captured by the Sasanians in 614 and stored in Ādurbādagān's capital Ganzak (Fig.5) [48]. Later, in 651, the Muslim Arabs, aiming to paralyze the Sasanians, also focused their final attack on Azerbaijan where Yazdegerd III attempted to collect his new army.

Ādurbādagān's strategic military and logistical location

Ādurbādagān, as with the whole of Media, held strategic and military value because of its geographical location, manpower, and fertile lands. Additionally, the province enjoyed a highly developed network of roads. Since the Achaemenid empire, the Royal Road, crossing Ecbatana of Media, connected Persian Susa with Anatolia [49]. In the Parthian period, Ādurbādagān, and particularly its capital Ganzak, became a Zoroastrian stronghold and logistical hub [50].

Indeed, the strategic roads, crossing Ādurbādagān, connected the empire's inner parts and the capital Ctesiphon with the main war zones. The one road connected Pārs with Ādurbādagān's Marāgha (Median Phraaspa/Phraata, which resisted Roman General Antony's siege in 36 BC) [51] and lasted toward Artaxata in Armin (Armenia) [52].

The next road, via the Ādurbādagān's city Ardabil stretched toward Arrān (Caucasian Albania) [53] up to the heavily fortified Darband Fortress in the Southern Caucasus and even toward the strategic Darial Pass (Dar-i Alān/Alan Gate, also known as the Caucasian Gates) [54] in the Northern Caucasus. The other highway linked Eastern Albania with Ecbatana [55].

The Great Khorasan Road was run from Baghdad connecting the Sasanian capital Ctesiphon via Ādurbādagān's Ecbatana toward Nīšāpūr of Khorasan, founded or rebuilt by Šāpūr I [56].

Surely, the Sasanians assessed Azerbaijan's sophisticated road network and its central Iranian geographical location, converting the province into a logistic hub of great military importance. The assessment of Ādurbādagān's religious and ideological functions, manpower, and logistic potential pushed the Sasanians to attach to the province one of the key roles in the imperial strategy to fight the Byzantines and Turks.

Thus, the Sasanians expanded Ādurbādagān's religious gravity (as the empire's Zoroastrian center), administrative and military infrastructure under

the kust-ī Ādurbādāgān umbrella far deep into the Caucasian lands challenged by the Turkish empire and Christian Byzantium.

Imperial reforms: kust-ī Ādurbādāgān and Arrān (Caucasian Albania)

The Imperium Parthicum was engaged in several wars with Imperium Romanum. The intense rivalry between these two great empires shaped the politics of both [57]. The permanent struggle with Byzantium over domination of the Near East prompted the Sasanians, after the military setbacks experienced by Kawād I [58], to re-think and re-design the empire's military architecture to improve its military might and administrative stability. This strategic perception was shaped not only because of the war with Byzantium but also by the devastating Turkish incursions deep into Ērānšahr from the Darband Pass in the Caucasus. This political and military reality as well as the partition of Armin (Armenia) [59] in 387 into Byzantine and Persian parts [60], forced the Sasanians to re-discover and re-evaluate the strategical importance of Arrān or Arrānšahr (Caucasian Albania), located on the north side of the Araz River.

In the 5th-6th centuries CE, the Sasanian kings Kawād I and his youngest son Xusrō I Anōšīrvān launched a fortifications' improvement program through the empire. They also initiated administrative reforms to upgrade the empire's defense, military, and power architectures. In parallel, the reforms were aimed at strengthening Zoroastrianism in the lands challenged by the Christian Orthodox Byzantium [61].

Thus, shāhanshāh Xusrō I abolished the one-person command of Ērān-Spāhbed [62], (iṣbahbadh al-bilād, Artēštārān sālār (chief of the warriors) [63], the office of the marshal or general of all Iranian forces) and replaced it with four generals reporting directly to the shāhanshāh. As a result of the reform, the kust-ī Ādurbādagān (region of Ādurbādagān) was created establishing the offices of the Ādurbādagān spāhbed (general) and later Ādurbādagān āmārgar (financial or tax/administrative officer) [64].

However, the proximity of the war zones to Ādurbādagān, holding the principal Ādur Gušnasp fire, made the province militarily vulnerable. The wars with the Byzantines and Turks pushed the Sasanians to realise that the security of the empire's core territories like Persia, Media, and Azerbaijan particularly had to be guaranteed and that Sasanian influence should be projected far afield [65].

The Sasanids, one may assume, addressed this challenge by establishing the kust-ī Ādurbādagān holding the centralized office of the supreme military command (isbahbadh) of Azerbaijan with the specially assigned

Ādurbādagān's spāhbed (general), which covered Ādurbādagān province itself and the adjoining lands of Arrān (Albania) and Armin (Armenia or Arminyaya) [66].

Indeed, the recently discovered seals (bulla) of Ādurbādagān's spāhbed, dating to the period of King Xusrō I, have inscriptions of the names of two generals both from the Pahlav House of Mehrān (Fig.6):

1) "Gōrgōn ī Mehrān … ud hujadag Xusrō wuzurg ērān-kust ī Ādurbādagān spāhbed" [67].
2) "Sēdhōš ī Mehrān šahr asābed ud hujadag Xusrō wuzurg ērān - kust ī Ādurbādagān spāhbed" [68].

Next, it would not be an overestimation to consider the kust of Ādurbādagān one of the most important regions for the empire due to its military and manpower potential as well as for its geostrategic location and logistical proximity to the main war zones. All these qualities supported the kust's functions to shield Ādurbādagān province-the imperial ideological and Zoroastrian center.

Thus, the Sasanian strategy was pragmatic: to project both military power and Zoroastrian influence far afield from Ādurbādagān, ensuring its military and ideological security from Christian Byzantium. The establishment of the Ādurbādagān spāhbed's military command allowed them to realize this strategy, thereby improving the empire's military and defense capabilities as well as strengthening the shāhanshāh's power and Zoroaster's faith in the lands contested by Christian Byzantium and the Turks, particularly in the Caucasus.

Fig 6: Sasanian Bulla of the General of the West, 600 CE-700 CE (www.barakatgallery.eu)

Interestingly, the Byzantine Emperor Heraclius assessed the fragility of Azerbaijan's security and thereby saw Armenia's and Albania's strategic

importance. In 623, he used Armenia as a foothold to occupy Ādurbādagān. As Tim Greenwood mentioned, Heraclius had recognised the potential for striking at the central Ādurbādagān province of the Sasanian Empire from the north, using Armenia as a bridgehead. Heraclius marched via Armenia and turned south, destroying Naxcawan (now Nakhchivan, Azerbaijan) and devastating Ādurbādagān's capital of Ganzak where the Holy Cross was stored. He ruined the great and most sacred fire-temple of the Sasanians, extinguishing the fire in Ādur Gušnasp and polluting the water of the lake in the fire complex with corpses. Later, Heraclius occupied Arrān (Albania) and encamped near its capital of Partaw (now Barda, Azerbaijan), calling Armenian, Albanian, and Iberian princes, and governors to join his service [69]. In Arrān, he attempted to recruit new troops for his army shrinking the Sasanian manpower from Caucasia and enforcing Christianity in the region.

It is safe to assume that the Sasanians realized the strategic importance of the Caucasus and Armin (Armenia) and Arrān (Albania) in particular. In the late 220s, Ardaxšīr I, aiming to secure his power, intervened in Armenia to overthrow the local Arsacid dynasty with military help from Arrān. In 252, Shāpūr I conquered Armenia, proclaiming himself lord of Armenia [70], and fortified Ādurbādagān into a military and religious bastion against Byzantine and Christianity [71].

However, the problems became more tangled when the King of Arsacid Armenia, Tiridates III and protégé of the Romans [72], converted to Christianity in 301, jeopardizing Sasanian interests and changing the regional balance of power. Shāpūr II tried to reverse the trend and restore the fortune of the Sasanians and Zoroastrianism, or at least to stop or slow down the military and religious advance of Christian Byzantium. Thus, in 371, clearly realizing the importance of securing Arrān on the Sasanian side, Shāpūr II together with Arrān shāh Urnayr fought against the joint Roman-Armenian force in the battle of Bagavan [73].

Nevertheless, a significant geopolitical shift occurred in 387 when Armenia was divided between Byzantium and the Sasanian Empire. By implementing this policy to maintain Armenia in a state of dependency, the Sasanians installed the Armenian marzpanate [74] extending Albania over Arts'ax [75] and Utik. Later, in 428, the Sasanians expanded Ādurbādagān to include regions of Siwnik, Parskahayk and Paytakaran [76].

It is difficult to overestimate the complete abolishment of Arsacid Armenia in 428 by the Sasanians following the nomination of the marzbān for the military administration [77]. This historical event shifted the geopolitics in the Caucasus and the Byzantine-Sasanian frontline. The Eastern Roman

Empire became within striking distance of the Sasanian religious center of Azerbaijan, shaking Zoroastrianism through the whole Ērānšahr. The new geopolitical shift increased Arrān's strategic and military for the Sasanians, pushing them to strengthen the region as a bulwark shielding Azerbaijan from the Byzantines and Turks.

In this light, the establishment of kust-ī Ādurbādāgān with the specially assigned Ādurbādagān spāhbed (general) could be considered a measure addressing the new geopolitical reality. Thus, Xusrō I's reform allowed the re-design of the Sassanian military and power architecture in this corner of the empire through the creation of the Ādurbādagān military command (spāhbed) and administrative functions such as the office of tax/revenue (āmārgar) in Arrān (Albania). It also strengthened the empire's defense and military capabilities by incorporating Arrānian (Albanian) troops into the Sasanian imperial army under the Ādurbādagān spāhbed's command.

The Sasanian strategy was effective: project imperial influence far afield via the expansion of Ādurbādagān's military and administrative functions in Albania. It also held paramount significance in enforcing both the shāhanshāh's central power and the Zoroastrian faith in Albania against the challenge of Orthodox Byzantium (Caucasian Albania was re-baptized into Nestorian Orthodox Christianity at the beginning of the 7th CE) [78].

In summary, this strategy increased the gravity of Ādurbādagān as the center of Zoroastrianism cementing Sasanian power and Zoroaster's faith (as the unique imperial religion) on the northern bank of the Araxes, where the military and religious rivalry with Orthodox Byzantium and the Turks were in the stages of war.

It is therefore that the establishment of the Ādurbādagān command (isbahbadh) under a specially assigned general increased the effectiveness of the Sasanian military operations up to Darband Fortress on the frontier with the Turks in Caucasia. Despite Darband, at that time, being within the semi-independent or vassal Arrān šahr [79], the Sasanids maintained a huge military garrison under the direct supervision of the Ādurbādagān spāhbed [80]. They strongly believed that Arrānian (Albanian) forces alone were not sufficient to shield the invaders' incursions via the Darband Passage deep into Ērānšahr.

Notable, discovered and translated official Pahlavi inscriptions on the walls of Darband confirm Darband's subordination to the šahr Ādurbādagān āmārgār (tax or revenue officer). The Pahlavi inscription "en ud az en abarbar Dariuš-i Ādurbādagān āmārgār" was translated as: "This and higher than this made by Dariush, Ādurbādagān's revenue/tax collector" (Fig.8) [81].

Thus, it can be assumed that the Darband's official Pahlavi inscription by the Ādurbādagān tax collector and the Sasanian heavy military presence (up to 20,000 men) in the east Caucasian fortresses (Darband, Torpakh kala or Saharestan Yazdagerd, Beshbarmag, Gilgilchay Defense Wall or Apzut Kawāt wall, Fig.9) [82] under the Ādurbādagān spāhbed's command as well as the location of the kust-ī Ādurbādagān marzbān in Azerbaijan's city of Ardebil confirm the projection of Azerbaijan's political, military, and administrative functions to Arrān to form the entire so-called Ādurbādagān šahr on the both banks of the Araxes [83].

Fig 7: Darband wall's official Pahlavi inscription "en ud az en abarbar Dariuš-i Ādurbādagān āmārgār" was translated as: "This and higher than this made by Dariush, Ādurbādagān's chief fiscal officer" [84]

Fig 8 (a, b): The seal's photo and impression of āmārgar of Ādurbādagān [85, 86]

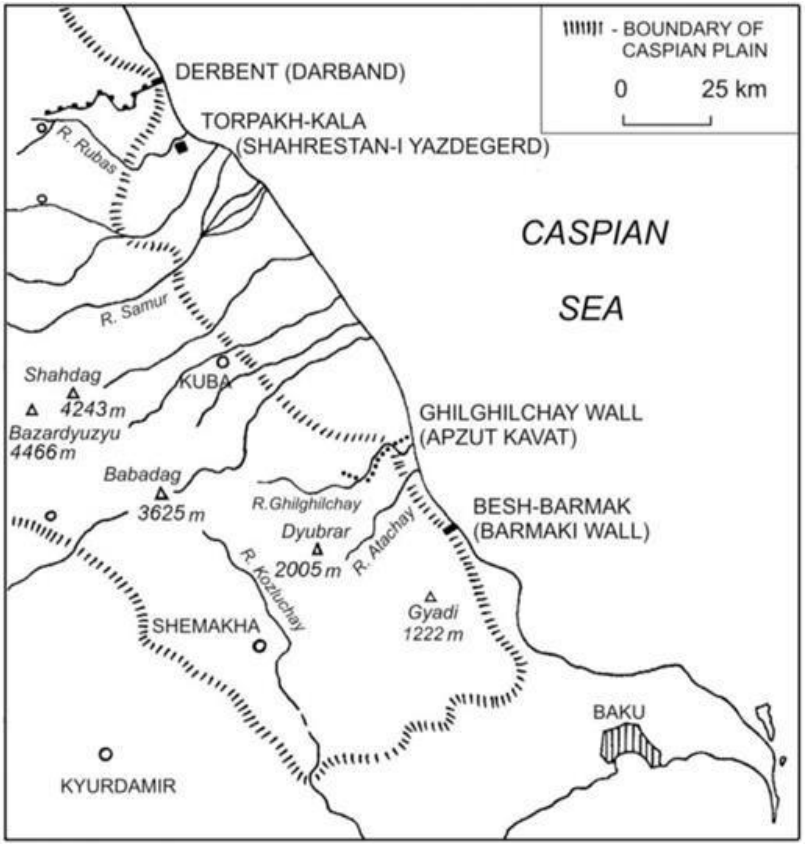

Fig 9: Map of Arrān šahr's (Caucasian Albania) fortifications erected in the Sasanian period [87]

Notably, the marzbān was based in Azerbaijan's city of Ardebil (šahrestān-ī Ādurbādagān/city of Ādurbādagān) [88], where it was responsible for supporting the Ādurbādagān spāhbed's troops on the Caucasian and Armenian fronts. The command also ensured the security of the great fire-temple of Ādur Gušnasp [89].

It is not surprising that the name, military and administrative functions of Azerbaijan were projected onto Arrān. The local Arrānian (Albanian) nobility was close to the Sasanian crown. Since the rein of Arrānshāh Urnayr (350-375), one can speak of the establishment of close dynastic ties with the shāhanshāh's family. King Urnayr was married to the daughter of shāhanshāh Šāpur II (309-379) and Arrānshāh Aswahen (415-440) was the son of the sister of Šāpur III (383-388) and the husband of the daughter of shāhanshāh Yazdgerd II (439-457). Arrānshāh Vache II (440-462) was the son of the sister of shāhanshāhs Hormizd III (457-459) and Peroz I (459-484) [90].

The Sasanian strategy toward Arrān included the establishment of blood-ties between the ruling dynasties on the shah's level. In parallel, they supported close ties on the regional elite level between the military and noble families (Houses) of Ādurbādagān and Arrān, which were members of the Pahlav Ispahbudhan House and Pahlav Mehrān House, respectively. This strategy promoted a closer and stronger attachment of Arrān to the Sasanian empire, thereby preventing or minimizing the Byzantine's influence. After the partition of Armenia, the Sasanians could not afford to lose Arrān (Albania), a strategic kingdom shielding Ērānšahr and Ādurbādagān from the north.

In this light, the King of Albania Varaz Grigor (628-637), a Zoroastrian name that may have been Gadvšnasp [91] before his second baptism into Dyophysite Christianity [92], adopted the title Arrānshāh. He was a member of the wuzurgān Mehrān family (a Pahlav noble-family, separate or a branch of the Pahlav Ispahbudhan House). Moreover, Arrānshāh Varaz Grigor was related to Xusrō I Anōšīrvān was even "himself a noble of the family of Ardaxšīr I", and Prince Javanshir (Juanšer) of Caucasian Albania (Arrān) was a son of Varaz Grigor (Fig.10). The Pahlav House of Mehrān held high-ranking positions in the Sasanian hierarchy and occupied high command over the frontline in the north, leading the negotiations with the Khaqan of the Turks.

Fig 10: Arrānshāh Javanshir (Pahlavi: Juanšer), sculptor Fuad Abdurahmanov, National Museum of History, Baku, Azerbaijan

Interestingly, General Rostam Farrokhzad of Ādurbādagān escorted and introduced Prince Javanshir to the last Sasanian King Yazdagird III (a grandson of Xusrō II) in Ctesiphon. Although Caucasian Albania was occasionally independent or semi-independent state, its defense was under the command of the Ādurbādagān spāhbed, who in the late Sasanian period was Rostam Farrokhzad of Ādurbādagān. General and Prince of Azerbaijan Rostam Farrokhzad was a member of the Pahlav House of Ispahbudhan.

Next, in the battle of al-Qadisiyyah between the Sasanians and Muslim Arabs (November 16-19, 636), Prince Javanshir was the commander (spāhbed) of the Arrānian (Albanian) troops which were an integral part of the Sasanian Imperial Army under the command of spāhbed Rostam Farrokhzad. For his gallantry and valor at al-Qadisiyyah, Javanshir was rewarded with villages as well as military and court insignia and was promoted to the rank of marzbān. In 637, with 3000-4000 troops, Javanshir helped arrange shāhanshāh Yazdgerd III's evacuation from the Sasanian capital Ctesiphon besieged by the Muslims. Yazdgerd III awarded Javanshir two golden spears and shields and acknowledged his bravery, awarding him a flag,-the Standard of Jamshid (Derafsh-e Kavian) which was the highest honor for loyalty and bravery [93].

Before the final defeat of the Sasanian army in the Battle of Nahāvand in 642, Javanshir arrived in Ādurbādagān. One may assume that he planned to

resume command of the Sassanian kust ī Ādurbādagān military in the wake of Rostam's death and following Yazdgerd's strong will to collect a new army in Media to fight the Muslims. However, Rostam's brother Khorrzad (Xwarrahzād/Farrukhzād) was appointed spāhbed of Ādurbādagān and Javanshir fled back to the Albanian capital Partaw, founded by Kawād I (Fig11). Later, Javanshir declined the almost certainly figure spāhbed Khorrzad's offer to marry his sister [94] but married the Khazar Turkic princess [95] to stop incursions via the Darband pass and stabilize Albania on the eve of the Sasanian collapse.

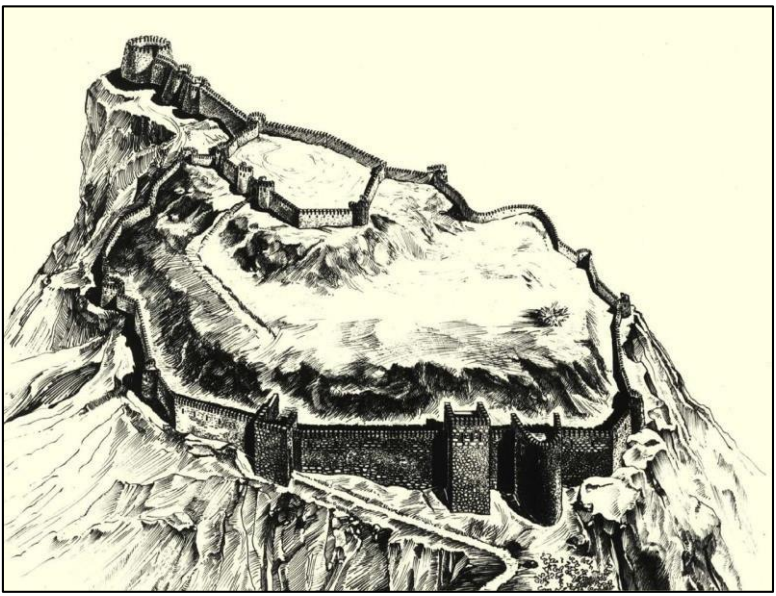

Fig 11: Javanshir Fortress, reconstruction, Ismailli region, National Museum of History, Baku, Azerbaijan

Intriguingly, there was confirmed evidence that after the collapse of the Sasanian Empire, the Muslim Arabs offered Arrānshāh Javanshir to become the ruler of the entire Ādurbādagān šahr, but he refused it for an obscure reason. Soon after, Javanshir was murdered during Christian service at Partaw's Albanian Orthodox church [96].

The close family ties between the Sasanian Kings and the Kings of Albania (Arrān) were a key element in the Sasanian strategy to enforce central and military power as well as the Zoroastrian faith, which had been eroded by Byzantium in the strategically important region of Arrān. Arrānshāh and his court were close to the shāhanshāh, using Pahlavi as the official language and practicing the Sasanian jurisprudence [97].

Therefore, one may assume that Arrān was close to the crown experiencing the deep-seated Iranian influence that generated a specific political environment to project Ādurbādagān's military and administrative functions up to Darband on the Caspian Sea. Thus, in the late Sasanian period, Ādurbādagān and Arrān became interchangeable names [98] creating entire Ādurbādagān šahr on both banks of the Araz River.

Conclusion

Official propaganda presented the rise of the Sasanians as the restoration of truth and Persian glory and rule in the lands that previously belonged to the Achaemenian dynasty. The Sasanians portrayed themselves as the successors of the Achaemenid Persians. The early Sasanians strove to eliminate the Parthian era remnants of Hellenism and re-enforce Zoroastrianism as the only religion of Ērānšahr. King Shāpūr I declared Zoroastrianism the imperial religion, proclaiming the last surviving Great Fire of State, Ādur Gušnasp in Ādurbādagān, the most sacred fire and granting it the rank of "cathedral". Shāpūr I thus attached the Sasanians to Ādur Gušnasp, which was classified as the warriors' class fire of the highest grade. This significant shift had fundamental political, religious, and ideological reasons.

Ideologically, the Sasanians' declared political and ideological ambitions encouraged them to distance themselves from the ruined and desecrated fire-temple of Anahitā where Alexander had the Holy Avesta burned. The last surviving Great Fire of State in Ādur Gušnasp, which had never been destroyed by the Macedonians and where the copy of Avesta in golden lettering was kept untouched, was possibly the only religiously and ideologically convenient fire-temple for the Sasanids' declared ambitions.

Politically, by attaching themselves to the Ādur Gušnasp warrior's class fire, the early Sasanians presented themselves to the whole Ērānšahr and the neighboring states as great warriors. Even keeping the Anahitā fire in their hearts and guarding it as the temple of their rise to power, the early Sasanians, nonetheless, obligated every new shāhanshāh to make a pilgrimage and donate royal gifts to Ādur Gušnasp temple, thereby signifying its highest rank.

It should not be excluded from the consideration that by declaring Ādur Gušnasp the empire's "cathedral" fire, the Sasanians reacted to internal political demands. By this step, they established direct political control via the mobedān mobed (priest of priests) over the powerful, rich, and influential Zoroastrian priesthood of Persian and Medes origin. The highest priests Kirdēr-Gušnasp and Ādurbād-ī Mahraspānd, both affiliated with Ādur Gušnasp, were close to the crown and advised the shāhanshāhs. Thus, by

declaring Ādur Gušnasp as the empire's most sacred and "cathedral" fire, the early Sasanians transformed Ādurbādagān into the religious "core" of the state and the centre of imperial Zoroastrian propaganda.

Notably, Azerbaijan was a province controlled by the Parthian Pahlav House of Ispahbudhan, which had close relations with the other powerful Pahlav House of Mehrān, the shāh's dynasty in Arrān (Albania). Both families were influential in Sasanian internal politics, recalling that shāhanshāh Xusrō I's mother was a noblewoman of Ispahbudhan and the Sasanian military elite was mostly from both the Ispahbudhan and Mehrān Houses. Thus, keeping "an eye" on the Ādurbādagān and Arrān noble (šahrdārān) families' politics was a high priority of the House of Sāsān in their attempt to reduce the great feudal lords' power in the empire's internal politics. Moreover, by controlling the nobles' activity, the House of Sāsān focused on preventing any possible Pahlav Houses revolt or coup d'etat, though General Bahrām Chōbīn of Mehrān did briefly become shāhanshāh Bahrām VI.

The transformation of Azerbaijan into the religious center of the empire was of benefit to the Sasanian ideology, military, administration, and internal politics. However, its proximity to the empire's war zones rendered the province vulnerable, which was noted by both the Sasanians and their enemies. This challenge was partially addressed within the widely targeted reforms of Xusrō I Anōšīrvān.

King Xusrō I reform's strategy, regarding the discussed regions, aimed to ensure the security of Ādurbādagān and the surrounding lands, particularly Arrān, by strengthening both Sasanian central power and Zoroastrianism as the unique imperial religion, which had been eroded by Christian Byzantium in Caucasia, adjoining Ādurbādagān lands.

In particular, the establishment of the kust-ī Ādurbādagān spāhbed military command, covering Arrān/Arrānšahr (Albania) facilitated the incorporation of Arrānian (Albanian) troops into the Sassanian Imperial Army under the command of Ādurbādagān general (spāhbed). The reform expanded Ādurbādagān's military (spāhbed) and financial-administrative (āmārgar) functions in Albania up to Darband in Caucasia.

The reform pulled Arrān closer to the Sasanian crown, that was cemented by blood ties between the ruling dynasties of shāhanshāh and Arrānshāh. The discovered Arrānshāh Aswahen's state seal confirms the closeness of the Albanian nobility to the crown by using Pahlavi as the official language applying the Sasanian administrative and juridical practice.

Finally, Xusrō I Anōšīrvān's reform re-organized the administrative and military architecture of this corner of the empire, expanding Ādurbādagān's functions onto Albania to form Ādurbādagān šahr strengthen the central and military power to fight Byzantium and the Turks.

Since Late Antiquity, particularly because of Xusrō I Anōšīrvān reforms, the names Arrān and Ādurbādagān became interchangeable on the north bank of the Aras River, facilitating their further rapprochement into the entire region of Ādurbādagān (Azerbaijan).

References

1. Pourshariati P. Decline and Fall of the Sasanian Empire: The Sasanian-Parthian Confederacy and the Arab Conquest of Iran, I.B. Tauris, London; 2008. p. 552.
2. Olbrycht M. Dynastic Connections in the Arsacid Empire and the Origin of the House of Sāsān, The Parthian and Early Sasanian Empires: Adaptation and expansion, Proceedings of a Conference held in Vienna 14-16 June, ed. by Sarkosh C, Pendleton E, Alram M, Daryaee T, Oxbow Books Editor. 2016;5:160. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvh1dkb6
3. Farridnejad Sh. Zarautrtma Zoroastrian and Iranian Studies in Honour of Philip G. Kreyenbroek, Brill, London, 2021, 332.
4. Agathias. The Histories, translated by Joseph D. Frendo, De Gryter, Berlin, 1975, 163.
5. Frye R. The Political History of Iran under the Sasanians, Cambridge History of Iran. Cambridge. 1983;3(1):74.
6. Bosworth C. The History of Al-Tabari, The Sasanids, the Byzantines, the Lakhmids, and Yemen, New York. 1999;5:458.
7. Darayee T. Ardaxšīr and the Sasanians' Rise to Power. ANABASIS, Studia Classica et Orientalia. 2010;1:236-255.
8. Shayegan R. The Arsacids and Commagene, in: The Parthian and Early Sasanian Empires ed. Vesta Sarkhosh *et al*., Philadelphia, Oxbow; 2016. 8-22.
9. Domiziana R. Sasanian Kings as Decision-Makers: Reshaping Ērānshahr, in: Narratives of Power in the Ancient World ed. Urška Furlan, Thomas Alexander Husoy and Henry Bohun, Cambridge Scholars Publishing; 2022. p. 252-270.

10. Maksymiuk K. Armenia in Political and Military Activities of Ardaxšīr I, Persica Antiqua. 2021; 1(1):87-96. https://doi.org/10.22034/PA.2021.13372

11. Darayee T; 2010.

12. Kreyenbroek P. Zoroastrianism under the Sasanians, in: Teachers and Teachings in the Good Religion: Opera Minora on Zoroastrianism, ed.: Kianoosh Rezania, Harrassowitz Verlag, 2013, 259.

13. Darayee T. Sasanian Persia: The Rise and Fall of an Empire, I.B. Taurus, London, 2009, 248.

14. Shayegan R. Arsacids and Sasanians: Political Ideology in Post-Hellenistic and Late Antique Persia, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2011, 539.

15. Fowlkes-Childs B. The Sasanian Empire (224-651 A.D.), in: Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History, New York, the Metropolitan Museum of Art; 2016 April. http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/sass/hd_sass.htm.

16. Shayegan R. The End of the Parthian Arsacid Empire, in: The End of Empires, ed: Michael Gehler, Robert Rollinger and Philipp Strobl, Springer, 2022, 761.

17. Kreyenbroek P.; 2013.

18. Potts D, Matthew C. "Fires of Iran, Great", ed. Oliver Nicholson, the Oxford Dictionary of Late Antiquity. Oxford University Press, Oxford; 2018, p. 1744.

19. Gnoli G. Zoroaster's Time and Homeland: A Study on the Origins of Mazdeism and Related Problems, Istituto universitario orientale, Avesta, Naples; 1980, p. 279.

20. Bosworth C. Azerbaijan iv, Encyclopedia Iranica, III/2-3; 2011; p. 224-231. https://www.iranicaonline.org August 18.

21. Ghodrat-Dizaji M. Administrative Geography of the Early Sasanian Period: Case of Ādurbādagān, Iran: Journal of the British Institute of Persian Studies. 2007;45:87-93. https://doi.org/10.1080/05786967.2007.11864720

22. Khalifa-zadeh M. Adurbadagan and Arran (*Caucasian albania*) in the Late Sasanian Period. International Journal of History. 2023;5(2):15-18. https://doi.org/10.22271/27069109.2023.v5.i2a.220

23. Boyce M, ĀDUR GUŠNASP, Encyclopedia Iranica. 2014 Feb;I(5):475-476. http://www.iranicaonline.org.

24. Yamomoto Y. The Zoroastrian Temple Cult Of Fire In Archaeology And Literature, Part II, Orient, 1981;17:67-104. https://doi.org/10.5356/orient1960.17.67

25. Kreyenbroek P.; 2013.

26. Dandamayev M. MAGI, Encyclopedia Iranica, https://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/magi 1January, 2000.

27. Gamsakhurdia K. Fire Priests and Magi in Iberia. Tbilisi State University. SPEKALI. 2020; 4

28. https://www.spekali.tsu.ge/index.php/en/article/viewArticle/14/230

29. Qaderi Z. Maguses, Their Religion and Ethnicity (Median or Persian, Zoroaster or Anti-Zoroaster)? 2012. http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3912158

30. Diakonoff I. Istoriya Midii ot drevneĭshikh vremen do kontsa 4 v. do n.e. (History of Midia from Ancient Times till the End of 4th BC). Moscow & Leningrad: Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk SSSR; 1956. p. 453.

31. Qaderi Z; 2012.

32. Shayegan R. Bardia and Gaumāta: An Achamenid Enigma Reconsidered. Bulletin of the Asia Institute. 2006;20:65-76.

33. Skjærvø O. KARTIR, Encyclopedia Iranica. 2012 Dec;15(6):608-628 http://www.iranicaonline.org.

34. Tafazzolī A. Ādurbād Ī Mahrspandān, Encyclopedia Iranica, I/5, 477 http://www.iranicaonline.org 6 March 2014.

35. Choksky J. Sacral Kingship in Sasanian Iran, the Circle of Ancient Iranian Studies (CAIS). https://www.cais-soas.com/CAIS/History/Sasanian/sacral_kingship.htm

36. Howard-Johnston J. The Late Sasanian Army, in: Late Antiquity: Eastern Perspectives ed. Teresa Bernheimer and Adam Silverstein. Warminster: The Gibb Memorial Trust; 2012. p. 87-127.

37. Boyce M. On the Sacred Fires of the Zoroastrians, Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. 1968;31(1):52-68.

38. Kreyenbroek P.; 2013.

39. Kotwal F, Kreyenbroek P. Alexander the Great ii. In Zoroastrian Tradition, Encyclopedia Iranica, Online Edition; 1982. http://www.iranicaonline.org 2011 July.

40. Kreyenbroek P.; 2013.

41. Ghodrat-Dizaji M.; 2007.

42. Chaumont M. ATROPATES, Encyclopedia Iranica. 2011 Aug;3(1):17-18. https://www.iranicaonline.org.

43. Khalifa-Zadeh M, Maksymuik K. Reforms of Sasanian king Khusro I and the northern bank of the Araxes-Arrān (Caucasus Albania). Historia i Świat. 2023;12:167-182. DOI: 10.34739/his.2023.12.10

44. Ghodrat-Dizaji M. Disintegration of Sasanian Hegemony over Northern Iran (AD 623-643), Iranica Antiqua. 2011;46:315-329. doi: 10.2143/IA.46.0.2084424

45. Kreyenbroek P.; 2013.

46. Kreyenbroek P.; 2013.

47. Hakimifar Kh. Magi and their Influence on the Zoroastrian Religion. https://www.academia.edu/40497661/Magi_and_their_Influence_on_the_Zoroastrian_Religion

48. Maksymiuk K. Destruction of the Ādur Gušnasp temple in Ādurbādagān as a revenge for abduction of the Holy Cross from Jerusalem in the context of the letters of Heraclius, *Matamorfozii istorii*. 2017;9:109-125.

49. Greenwood T. Armenian Neighbours (600-1045), Chapter 8, in: The Cambridge History of the Byzantine Empire c.500-1492, ed. Jonathan Shepard, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge; 2009. p. 333-364.

50. David F. Pre-and Early-Roman Roads of Asia Minor. The Persian Royal Road, IRAN. 1998;36:15-43. https://doi.org/10.2307/4299973

51. Boyce M. GANZAK, Encyclopedia Iranica. 2012 Feb;10(3):289-290 ttps://www.iranicaonline.org.

52. Minorsky V. Roman and Byzantine Campaigns in Atropatene, Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, London. 1944;11(2):243-265.

53. Frye R. The History of Ancient Iran. Verlag C.H. Beck, 1984, 450.

54. Ehsan Y. The Cambridge History of Iran, the Seleucid, Parthian and Sasanian Periods. Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, Cambridge. 1983;3:485.

55. Sauer E. Dariali: The “Caspian Gates” in the Caucasus from Antiquity to the Age of the Huns and the middle Ages. Oxford, Oxbow Books; 2020. p. 10-88.

56. Chaumont M. ALBANIA, Encyclopedia Iranica. 2014 May;I(8):806-810 http://www.iranicaonline.org.

57. Francfort H. The Grand’ Route of Khorasan (Great Khorasan Road) during the third millennium.

58. BC and the “dark stone” artifacts. In: The Iranian Plateau during the Bronze Age; Development of Urbanisation, Production and Trade ed. Meyer JW, Vila E, Mashkour M, Casanova M, Vallet R. MOM Editions. Maison de l’Orient et de la Méditerranée-Jean Pouilloux, Lyon, 2019, 356.

59. Kettenhofen E. Die Arsakiden in den armenischen Quellen, in: Das Partherreich und seine Zeugnisse, ed: Josef Wiesehöfer, Stuttgart: F. Steiner; 1998, 570.

60. Darayee T. Shahrestaniha-i Eranshahr: A Middle Persian Text on Late Antique Geography, Epic and History, Mazda Publishers, California, 2002, 90.

61. Dum-Tragut J, Gippert G. Caucasian Albania in Medieval Armenian Sources (5^{th}-13^{th} Centuries), in: Caucasian Albania, An International Handbook, ed. Jost Gippert and Jasmine Dum-Tragut, De Gruyter, 2023, 753.

62. Maksymuik K. Geography of Roman-Iranian wars. Military operations of Rome and Sasanian Iran, Siedlce, Poland, 2015, 143.

63. Darayee T. Shahrestaniha-i Eranshahr: A Middle Persian Text on Late Antique Geography, Epic and History, Mazda Publishers, California, 2002, 90.

64. Darayee T. Shahrestanihay-e Eranshahr; 2002.

65. Farrokh K, Karamian H, Maksymiuk K. A Synopsis of Sasanian Military Organization and Combat Units, Publishing House of Siedlce University, Poland, 2018, 160.

66. Gyselen R. La géographie administrative de l’empire sassanide: les témoignages épigraphiques en moyen-perse. Bures-sur-Yvette: Groupe pour l’Étude de la Civilisation du Moyen-Orient, 2019;38:462. https://doi.org/10.4000/abstractairanica.52803

67. Howard-Johnston J. “The Late Sasanian Army”, in: Late Antiquity: Eastern Perspectives, ed: Teresa Bernheimer and Adam Silverstein, The Gibb Memorial Trust; 2012. p. 87-127.

68. Shayegan R. The End of Parthian Arsacid Empire, in: The End of Empires ed. Robert Rollinger and Philipp Strobl, Springer, 2022, 761.

69. Maksymiuk K. The Pahlav-Mehrān family faithfulallies of Xusrō I Anōšīrvān, Metamorvozi Istorii. 2015;6:163-179.

70. Gyselen R, Sasanian Seals and Sealings in the A. Saeedi Collection (ACTA Iranica), Peeters Publishers, Belgium, 2007, 407.

71. Howard-Johnston J. Heraclius’ Persian Campaigns and the Revival of the East Roman Empire, 622-630, War in History. 1999;6(1):1-44. https://doi.org/10.1177/0968344599006001

72. Chaumont M. ALBANIA, Encyclopedia Iranica. 2014 May;I(8):806-810 http://www.iranicaonline.org.

73. Schippmann K. Azerbaijan iii. Pre-Islamic History, Encyclopedia Iranica. 2014 Feb;3(2):221-224. https://www.iranicaonline.org.

74. Tiridates III, Encyclopedia Brittanica, https://www.britannica.com/biography/Tiridates-III-king-of-Armenia

75. Darayee T. The Sasanian Empire, in: The Syriac World, ed. Daniel King, Routledge; 2018. p. 33-43.

76. Garsoian N. The Marzpanate, in: The Armenian People from Ancient to Modern Times ed. p. 428-652.

77. Richard Hovannisian, St. Martin’s Press, New York; 1997. p. 95-117.

78. Minorsky V. Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. 1953;15(3):504-529.

79. Greenwood T. Sasanian Reflections in Armenian Sources, e-Sasanika. 2008;15:28.

80. Garsoian N. The Byzantine Annexation of Armenian Kingdoms in the Eleventh Century, The Armenian People from Ancient to Modern Times ed. Richard Hovannisian, St. Martin’s Press, New York; 1997. p. 187-198.

81. Gadjiyev M. A Seal of Āhzwahēn, King of Caucasian Albania, Journal of Ancient History. 2003;1:102-119.

82. Gadjiev M. Aran and Adurbadagan in The 6th Century, in: Ethnocultural Heritage of Caucasian Albania, Proceedings of the tenth International

Conference on Caucasian Albania: Religious and Social life, Baku. 2023;4:73-82.

83. Gadjiev M. Religious life in Caucasian Albania: Christianity vs. Zoroastrianism, Journal of Ancient History, Moscow. 2022;82(3):673-699.

84. Kasumova S, Gadjiev M. Middle Persian Inscriptions of Derbent, the 6th c. AD, Moscow, Vostocnaya Literatura; 2006. p. 128.

85. Aliyev A, Gdajiyev M, Gaithner G, Kohl Ph, Magomedov R, Aliev I. Gilgilchay Long Defensive Wall: New Investigations, Ancient East and West. 2006;5(1-2):143-177.

86. Tullagov A. Daryal vorota Alan (Daryal Gates of Alan), Istoria, Etnologia, Arxeologia, Izvestiya SOGISI, 2018;27(66):15-29. DOI: 10.23671/VNC.2018.1-2.37959

87. Gadjiev M. Darband Epigraphy i. Middle Persian Inscriptions, Encyclopedia Iranica; 2016 Jan. http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/darband-epigraphy-01 26.

88. Cereti C, Moradi Y, Nasrollazadeh C. A Collection of Sasanian Clay Sealings Preserved in the Takiya-e Mo'āven al-Molk of Kermanshah, in: Monagrafie di Mesopatamia XIV, Casa Editrice Le Lettere-Firenze, 2011, 383.

89. Gyselen R. La Géographie Administratve de l'Empire Sassanide: Les Témoignages Épigraphiques en Moyenperse. Res Orientales. XXV. Bures-sur-Yvete: Groupe pour l'Étude de la Civilisaton du Moyen-Orient. Leuven: Peeters. 2019;38:462.

90. Aliyev A, Gdajiyev M, Gaithner G, Kohl Ph, Magomedov R, Aliev I. Gilgilchay Long Defensive Wall: New Investigations, Ancient East and West. 2006;5(1-2):143-177.

91. Ghorat-Dizaji M.; 2010.

92. Gyselen R. Nouveaux Materiaux Pour La Geographie Historique De L'empire Sassanide: Sceaux Administratifs De La Collection Ahmad Saeedi, Peeters Publishers, Belgium, 2002, 227.

93. Toumanoff Cyril. Introduction to Christian History II: States and Dynasties of the Formative Period, Traditio., 1961;17:1-106.

94. Hoyland R. From Albania to Arrān, The East Caucasus between the Ancient and Islamic Worlds (ca. 330 BCE-1000 CE), Gorgias Press, USA, 2020, 406.

95. Gadjiev M. Religious life in Caucasian Albania: Christianity vs Zoroastrianism, Journal of Ancient History, Moscow. 2022;82(3):673-699.

96. Howard-Johnston J; 2012.

97. Greenwood T. Sasanian Reflections in Armenian Sources, e-Sasanika 5, University of St. Andrews; 2008. p. 1-28.

98. Imranli-Lowe K. The polities of the Caucasus and the regional powers in the medieval and early modern period, In: Caucasus Survey. 2020;8(1):1-20. DOI:10.1080/23761199.2020.1775388

99. Khalifa-zadeh M. Adurbadagan and Arran (Caucasian Albania) in the Late Sasanian Period, International Journal of History. 2023;5(2):15-18. DOI: https://doi.org/10.22271/27069109.2023.v5.i2a.220

100. Greenwood T. A Contested Jurisdiction: Armenia in Late Antiquity, in: Sasanian Persia: Between Rome and the Steppes of Eurasia ed. Eberhard Sauer, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh; 2017. p. 199-220. https://doi.org/10.3366/edinburgh/9781474401012.001.0001

101. Bosworth C. ARRĀN, Encyclopedia Iranica. 2012 Dec;II(5):520-522. http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/arran-a-region.

Peer Reviewed & Refereed

Research Trends in HISTORY

Volume - 1

Chief Editor
Dr. Arun Kumar

ISBN 9789393992949

₹ 709 US$ 16

Published by
Helmand Books
Office No 3, 1st Floor, Pocket - H34,
SEC-3, Rohini, Delhi, 110085, India
Toll Free (India): 18001234070

Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike
4.0 International (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0)